

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 243243

53

ORIGIN IO-06

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 EB-04 AID-05 FEAE-00 INT-05 OES-02

CIAE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00 RSC-01 INRE-00 SSO-00 AGR-05

SWF-01 NEA-06 EUR-08 PA-01 PRS-01 USIE-00 /057 R

DRAFTED BY IO/CMD:LEKAHN:LYM

APPROVED BY IO/CMD:WWWOODBURY

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O 051635Z NOV 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ESCAP, OCON, EMIN

SUBJECT: RED: ESCAP: FIRST SESSION OF COMMITTEE ON
NATURAL RESOURCES, NOVEMBER 5-11, 1974, BANGKOK

REF: BANGKOK 17428

FOLLOWING IS POSITION PAPER FOR AGENDA ITEM 5 AI:

1. PROBLEM: DOCUMENT E/CN.11/NR.1/WRD.11/L.3 WAS NOT AVAILABLE. HOWEVER, THE UN WATER RESOURCES SERIES NO. 44 "PROCEEDINGS OF THE 10TH SESSION OF THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA AND THE FAR EAST" HELD IN MANILA, SEPTEMBER 18-25, 1972 PROVIDED INFORMATION SUBMITTED BY GOVERNMENTS AS WELL AS CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THIS SUBJECT. IN ADDITION, THE "ASSESSMENT OF THE WORLD FOOD SITUATION, PRESENT AND FUTURE" PREPARED FOR THE UN WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE IN ROME, NOVEMBER 5-16, 1974 PROVIDES USEFUL INFORMATION ABOUT FUTURE TRENDS IN THE REGION.

2. U.S. POSITION: (1) THE U.S. DELEGATION MAY, AS
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PAGE 02 STATE 243243

APPROPRIATE, POINT OUT THAT DEVELOPING COUNTRIES OF THE

WORLD WERE EXPANDING THEIR AGRICULTURAL OUTPUT IN THE 1950'S AND 1960'S AS FAST AS THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES BUT THE RATES OF GROWTH OF FOOD DEMAND WERE GREATER IN THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES DUE TO FASTER GROWTH OF POPULATION.

THESE CONSIDERABLE ACHIEVEMENTS IN FOOD PRODUCTION REFLECTED DRAMATIC AND EFFECTIVE APPLICATION OF TECHNOLOGY IN MANY COUNTRIES, WHICH WILL NEED TO BE ACTIVELY ENLARGED UPON IN FUTURE YEARS. (2) THE U.S. DELEGATION MAY INDICATE THAT MEASURES TO BETTER USE AVAILABLE WATER CAN DO MUCH TO INCREASE CROP PRODUCTION ON PRESENTLY IRRIGATED AREAS. (3) THE U.S. DELEGATION MAY ALSO STATE THAT THE POTENTIAL FOR EXPANDED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IS LARGE IN THE RAINFED AREAS PROVIDED MODERN FARM PRACTICES ARE ADOPTED AND IMPROVED SEEDS ARE WIDELY USED WITH ADEQUATE FERTILIZATION. SEE FERC/74/7 OF 12TH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR ASIA AND THE FAR EAST HELD IN TOKYO SEPTEMBER 17-27, 1974 ON THE SUBJECT OF PRODUCTION IN RAINFED AREAS.

3. DISCUSSION: FAO ESTIMATES OF PROJECTIONS OF FOOD DEMAND TO 1985, USING AMD MEDIUM POPULATION VARIANT AND THE TREND GROWTH IN GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT, SHOW COMPOUND GROWTH RATES OF 3.4 PERCENT FOR DEVELOPING MARKET ECONOMIES IN THE FAR EAST. THIS WOULD MEAN AN INCREASE IN DEMAND OF 66 PERCENT BY 1985 OVER THE 1969-71 PERIOD COMPARED WITH ONLY 24 PERCENT IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES WITH MARKET ECONOMIES. WHILE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES MAY SHOW MODEST IMPROVEMENT IN DIETS, NEVERTHELESS, CEREALS, STARCHY ROOTS AND SUGAR WILL STILL BE NEARLY THREE FOURTHS OF TOTAL CALORIE DEMAND. ON THE BASIS OF RECENT PRODUCTION TRENDS CONTINUING UNCHANGED AND ASSUMING A STABLE CLIMATE, FOOD PRODUCTION IN THE DEVELOPING FAR EAST COUNTRIES WITH MARKET ECONOMIES IS PROJECTED TO INCREASE AT 2.4 PERCENT PER ANNUM, SLIGHTLY LESS THAN THE 2.6 PERCENT PER ANNUM GROWTH IN POPULATION FOR THE AREA. THIS RATE OF INCREASE IN FOOD PRODUCTION IS CONSIDERABLY LESS THAN THE INDICATIVE WORLD PLAN TARGET OF AN ANNUAL INCREASE OF 3.8 PERCENT IN CROP PRODUCTION.

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PAGE 03 STATE 243243

4. THERE HAS BEEN A MUCH SLOWER EXPANSION OF THE IRRIGATED AREA THAN IWP ENVISAGED AND POOR PROGRESS MADE ON THE MORE RATIONAL USE OF AVAILABLE WATER. WHILE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS AND OTHER INFORMATION PLACE THE INCREASE IN IRRIGATED AREA IN 14 COUNTRIES OF THE REGION AT 3.2 PERCENT PER ANNUM DURING DD-II, PAST EXPANSION OF IRRIGATION WITH A DECLINE IN RESERVES OF CULTIVABLE LAND SUGGEST ONLY 1 PERCENT OF INCREASED

PRODUCTION WOULD COME FROM ADDED ACREAGE WITH THE BALANCE FROM INCREASED YIELDS, USE OF BETTER VARIETIES AS WELL AS MORE FERTILIZER AND PESTICIDES IN ADDITION TO MORE INTENSIVE CROPPING. THE IRRIGATED AREA IN 13 FAR EASTERN COUNTRIES, NOT INCLUDING CHINA IS EXPECTED TO INCREASE BY 26 MILLION HECTARES DURING 1970-1980 AND ANOTHER 25 MILLION HECTARES DURING 1980-1990. THESE INCREASES ARE SUBSTANTIALLY MORE THAN EARLIER ESTIMATES OF THE EXPANSION IN IRRIGATED AREA AND CONSEQUENTLY MAY NOT MATERIALIZE. RELIANCE ON IMPROVED FARMING PRACTICES, BETTER SEEDS AND MORE FERTILIZER ON THE LARGER AREAS UNDER CULTIVATION THAT ARE NOT IRRIGATED WITH SOME EXPANSION OF THE ARABLE AREA

IS MORE LIKELY TO RESULT IN MEETING THE RISING DEMAND FOR FOOD IN THE REGION. EXPANSION OF IRRIGATION ALONE WILL NOT CLOSE THE GAP BETWEEN DEMAND AND SUPPLY.

5. DECONTROL ON RECEIPT. INGERSOLL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NATURAL RESOURCES, PAPERS, MEETING AGENDA, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 NOV 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974STATE243243
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: LEKAHN:LYM
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740317-0369
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741169/aaaacgpo.tel
Line Count: 134
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN IO
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: BANGKOK 17428
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 MAY 2002 by ifshinsr>; APPROVED <11 DEC 2002 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RED: ESCAP: FIRST SESSION OF COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, NOVEMBER 5-11, 1974, BANGKOK
TAGS: OCON, EMIN, ESCAP
To: BANGKOK
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005